Controversial Issue Research Project

Mr. Lynch and Mrs. Pooler

Due Date: Tuesday, May 27

You will be choosing a topic related to the U.S. Constitution to research, using an authentic source (an interview), the library, and the internet. The topic could be an actual part of the Constitution, an Amendment, or an issue that has come up in Constitutional debate. I have included a list of 43 topics to choose from (and once a student chooses a topic no one else can take it). If you want to do a different topic, YOU MUST see me to have it approved first.

Along with your research, you will complete two main components:

1) Create a visual

AND

2) Write a research paper
OR
Produce and film a mini-documentary
OR
Design and build a website

You will be given a folder and a small composition notebook to help you organize your research. Inside the folder you will find an attached envelope where you will put your sources – one index card per source. You will have five weeks (not including April Vacation) to complete this project.

Research Process:

1) One portion of your research must be from an authentic source and you will conduct an interview to gather this information. Your choice of who to interview will be largely dependent on which topic you choose. For example, if you choose *Distracted Driving*, you might want to interview a police officer. If you choose *Cloning*, you might want to interview a scientist. Interviews can be in person or done over the phone, and they <u>must</u> be supervised by a parent or guardian. If you would like to set up a phone interview during school hours, you would need your parent's permission, but I can help supervise that. You should also include a written transcript of your questions and responses.

2) The second portion of your research can come from either the internet or a library. Preferably, you will do a combination of the two.

3) Use at least five sources for your information (the interview is one of those sources). Using the correct format included in this packet, write down each source on a separate index card and store them in the envelope inside your folder.

4) Take notes in your black & white composition book and store that notebook in your folder.

5) Compile a bibliography which you may do old-school style (type it out yourself using the formats included in the back of this packet) or use Noodle Tools (www.noodletools.com). It doesn't matter which project option you choose - EVERY student needs a bibliography.

Option #1: Research Paper

1) Write a paper that is <u>at least</u> four full pages typed (this does NOT mean three pages and a few lines on the fourth page).

2) Design a cool, cover page that includes your name and your topic title. Also, include a picture or pictures (they could be computer graphics, pictures from the internet, pictures from magazines, drawn by hand, etc.).

3) Break up the paper into five sections – one section for each essential question. Mr. Lynch and Mrs. Pooler will work with you on writing these essential questions. If it's easier, you can even break it up into six sections with one section just for the interview.

4) Include your Bibliography after the paper.

PAPER

- Cool cover page with title, author, date and a picture
- At least four pages, typed.
- Times New Roman font.
- 12-point font.
- Double spaced.
- One inch margins.
- Essential questions clearly labeled and typed in *italics and bolded.*
- Bibliography on a separate page(s) after paper.

Option #2: Mini-Documentary

Choosing this option means that you will be producing and filming a mini-documentary about your topic. A documentary is about a true event/topic. You can only choose this option if you have your own camera since I cannot guarantee the availability of the cameras in school. Since supervision would be an issue in school, you will also need to film part of the documentary outside of school hours. (While I can try to make some exceptions in rare cases, I make no promises, so you must at least *plan* to do part or all of your filming outside school hours. I will do the best I can to accommodate special requests.)

1) The mini-documentary must be between 3-6 minutes.

2) A ½ - 1 page typed "proposal" must be submitted to me within the first two weeks **(Due: April 29)** of the project if you choose to do a documentary. Documentaries are not scripted the same way movies are, but directors start filming with a basic story in mind (although that story may change and that's ok.) Follow the Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? format in your proposal.

3) While using at least some basic editing software for titles, transitions (like cuts and fades), and music is preferred, it is <u>not</u> mandatory. However, most PCs and Macs come with free editing software anyway. If you do use music, please make sure it is low enough so it does not take away from any speaking on the documentary. Do not overuse fancy transitions either – real documentaries use the basic "cut" and an occasional fade to black.

4) You may include anyone you want in your documentary. Some directors include themselves and others do not, so that is completely up to you. You may work on this with other students, but they are still responsible for their own project. One suggestion is that if two students work together, they can help each other out with both of their documentaries.

5) You must include all of your essential questions in your documentary.

Option #3: Design a website

Choosing this option means that you will be designing your own website about your controversial issue. This must be a live, working website which anyone can find on the internet. You will be graded on both your creativity and ability to discuss the topic. Just making a cool website is not enough – students must learn something about your issue after looking at your website. Something to consider – you cannot create an account without assistance from a parent. It's simple to create, but you must provide a valid e-mail address and they will e-mail you a confirmation. You may choose from two different providers – both free. You can choose www.webs.com or www.weebly.com. (There are pay options for both, but the free version works fine. You just have to deal with some ads.) If you are determined to use a different web provider see me and I will check it out. While I can help you to some extent, much of the designing will be done on your own so only choose the web design option if you would feel comfortable with this. If you would need someone to guide you each step of the way this may not be the best option for you.

1) Your website must include at least ten separate pages.

2) Each essential question must have its own page. (These are counted as part of the ten.) Each essential question must be explained well.

3) You must include at least five pictures related to your topic. Pictures can be embedded in a page or can be included as part of a photo gallery. Be careful how large your photos are because the free version does have a size limit.

4) You must include at least five links to articles about your topic.

5) You must include at least one link to a video (or embed the video if you have the space) related to your topic.

How to Write Your Bibiography
(These are the most up-to-date MLA format rules.)

Note: MLA abbreviates all months excect for May, June and July. For example, "February" is "Feb."

Book

Structure:
Last, First M. *Book*. City: Publisher, Year Published. Medium.

Example:
Carley, Michael J. *1939: The Alliance That Never Was and the Coming of World War II*. Chicago:

Dee, 1999. Print.

Chapter/Anthology

Structure:
Last, First M. "Section Title." *Book/Anthology*, Ed. First M. Last. Edition. City: Publisher, Year

Published. Page(s). Medium.

Example:
Melville, Herman. "Hawthorne and His Mosses." *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ed.

Nina Baym. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 1989. 5-25. Print.

*Note: Essays, shorts stories, and poems are put in quotes. Works originally published independently such as plays and novels generally are italicized.

Magazine

Structure:
Last, First M. "Article Title." *Magazine Title* Date Month Year Published: Page(s). Medium.

Example:
Pressman, Aaron. "Bottom Fishing in Rough Waters." *BusinessWeek* 29 Sept. 2008: 27. Print.

Newspaper

Structure:
Last, First M. "Article Title." *Newspaper Title* [City] Date Month Year Published: Page(s). Medium.

Example:
Campoy, Ana. "Gasoline Surges in Southeast After Ike." *The Wall Street Journal* 23 Sept. 2008: A14.

Print.

*Note: Only include [City] if it is not in the title. Do not include if the newspaper is well known or nationally published.

Journal

Structure:
Last, First M., and First M. Last. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Series Volume.Issue (Year Published):

Page(s). Medium.

Example:
Bharadwaj, Parag, and Katerine T. Ward. "Ethical Considerations of Patients with

Pacemakers."*American Family Physician* 78 (2008): 398-99. Print.

Website

Structure:
Last, First M. "Article Title." *Website Title*. Website Publisher, Date Month Year Published. Web.

Date Month Year Accessed.

Example:
Satalkar, Bhakti. "Water Aerobics." *Buzzle.com*. 15 July 2010. Web. 16 July 2010.

*Note: URL is optional unless the source cannot be located without it or if required by your instructor.

Online Database (Journal)

Structure:
Last, First M. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Series Volume.Issue (Year Published): Page(s). *Database*

Name. Web. Date Month Year Accessed.

Example:
Ahn, Hyunchul, and Kyoung-jae Kim. "Using Genetic Algorithms to Optimize Nearest Neighbors for

Data Mining." *Annals of Operations Research* 263.1 (2008): 5-18. *Academic Search Premier*. Web.

25 Sept. 2008.

*Note: URL is optional unless the source cannot be located without it or if required by your instructor.

TV/Radio

Structure:
"Episode." Contributors. *Program*. Network. Call Letter, City, Date. Medium.

Example:

"The Saudi Experience." Prod. Mary Walsh. *Sixty Minutes*. CBS. WCBS, New York, 5 May 2009.

Television.

Film

Structure:
Title. Dir. First M. Last and First M. Last. Perf. First M. Last, First M. Last, and First M. Last.

Distributor, Year Published. Media Type.

Example:
The Dark Knight. Dir. Christopher Nolan. Perf. Christian Bale, Heath Ledger, and Aaron Eckhart.

Warner Bros., 2008. DVD.

Sound Recording

Structure:
Contributors. "Song." *Album*. Band. Manufacturer, Year. Medium.

Example:
Corgan, Billy, and Butch Vig. "Today." *Siamese Dream*. Smashing Pumpkins. Virgins Records

America, 1993. CD.

Visual Art / Photograph

Structure:
Last, First M. *Title*. Year Created. Medium. Museum/Institution, Location.

Example:
Picasso, Pablo. *Three Musicians*. 1921. Oil on panel. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Lecture / Speech

Structure:
Last, First M. "Speech." Meeting / Organization. Location. Date. Description.

Example:
Obama, Barack H. "Inaugural Address." 2009 Presidential Inaugural. Capitol Building, Washington,

D.C. 20 Jan. 2009. Address.

Interview

MLA:
Interviewee. "Title." Interview by interviewer. Publication information. Medium.

Example:

Abdul, Paula. Interview by Cynthia McFadden. *Nightline*. ABC. WABC, New York. 23 Apr. 2009.

Television.

Cartoon

Structure:
Last, First M. "Title." Cartoon / Comic strip. Publication information. Medium.

Example:
Trudeau, Garry. "Doonesbury." Comic strip. *New York Times* 8 May 2008: 12. Print.

Controversial Topic Choices

First Amendment

Schools
School Dress Code
Pledge of Allegiance
School Newspapers/Yearbooks
Book censorship

Internet
Cyberbullying
Spam
Cybercrime

Entertainment
TV and movie ratings

Advertising
Tobacco advertising
Gambling advertising
Alcohol advertising
Telemarketing

Freedom of Expression
Flag burning

Freedom of the Press
Court Gag Orders
Libel and defamation
Cameras in the courtroom

Freedom of Religion
School Prayer
Religious holidays in schools
Religious school clubs
Bible in school

Other Amendments

2nd Amendment (Right to Keep Weapons)
4th Amendment (Freedom From Unreasonable Search and Seizure)
5th Amendment (Rights of Persons Accused of a Crime)
6th Amendment (Right to a Jury Trial in Criminal Cases)
12th Amendment (Election of President and Vice President)
13th Amendment (Slavery Outlawed)
14th Amendment (Rights of Citizens)
15th Amendment (Voting Rights)
19th Amendment (Women's Right to Vote)
25th Amendment (Presidential Succession)

Other Topics

Cloning
Drunk Driving
Affirmative Action
Racial profiling
Cell phones bans (in public places)
Smoking bans
Zero Tolerance in schools
Animal Abuse
Identity Theft
Plagiarism
Distracted Driving
Offshore Drilling
TSA Screening (at airports)

Feel free to come up with your own topic if you don't want to do any of these. (There are 43 topics to choose from though!) If you choose a topic that is not on this list it MUST be approved by your teacher first.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE RESEARCH PROJECT

PROJECT

Write a research paper
OR
Produce and film a mini-documentary
OR
Design and build a website

VISUAL

- Each student will share their visual with the class, explain what the topic was about, and answer questions from the class. The visual will also be on display for the Spring Open House.
- The Visual must explain the controversial topic.
- Examples: tri-fold poster display, papier mache with background poster, diorama with background poster, model etc.

FOLDER (This will be provided for you.)

- Black & White Composition Book (for notes)
- At least five sources
- Print-outs from your research (with important information highlighted)

DUE DATE: Tuesday, May 27

Controversial Issue Research Project

Visual Grade

Visual (Does it clearly explain your topic through either words, pictures, or something else? Does it *show* or *tell* the pros and cons of the issue? Is it easy to see – even from a distance? Did you put the appropriate time and effort into it?)	/100

Total Points: _____

Grade: _____

Research Grade

Note (Did you take notes? Did you find relevant and important information about your topic? Are your notes neat and organized?)	/40
Interview (Did you include the name of the person interviewed? Did you include a transcript of your interview questions?)	/30
Bibliography/Sources (Did you complete your five source notecards using the correct MLA format? Did you include a bibliography using the correct MLA format?)	/30

Total Points: _____

Grade: _____

Project Grade

Research Paper (Is your paper at least four pages typed? Do you have a cover title page? Did you include pictures? Did you include the essential questions? Is your paper informative? Has your paper been proofread?)	/100
Mini-Documentary (Is your documentary between 3-6 minutes? Did you submit a proposal? Did you include the essential questions? Is your documentary interesting and informative?)	/100
Website (Did you include at least 10 separate pages? Does each essential question have its own page? Did you include at least five pictures? Did you include at least five links to articles? Did you include at least one link to a video? Is your website interesting and informative?)	/100

Total Points: _____

Grade: _____